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SENSITIVE
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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CEN AND G/TIP BFLECK

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ELAB](#) [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [KPAO](#) [CS](#)
SUBJECT: COSTA RICA RESPONSE: TIP DOWNGRADE TO "TIER 2
WATCHLIST"

REF: STATE 58544

11. (SBU) On June 3, we informed Vice Minister of Public Security Ana Duran of Costa Rica's placement on the TIP Tier 2 Watch List, and we highlighted the specific recommendations for Costa Rica. Duran also heads the National Anti-Trafficking Coalition, comprised of government and NGO players. She was visibly unhappy and commented that "it's easy to criticize when you're not in our shoes." She said she would work on a Costa Rican press release with the Minister of Public Security (MPS) Janina del Vecchio and Attorney General Francisco Dall'Anese. We reiterated the U.S.'s commitment to working with the GOCR on trafficking issues, and we offered that the February interim report required for Tier 2 Watch List countries would give the GOCR an opportunity to show progress by then. Separately, we briefed Viviana Tinoco of the MFA's Human Rights Office about Costa Rica's TIP ranking.

12. (SBU) Later on June 3, DCM followed up in a phone call to Del Vecchio, who has been in her position for about two months. She had not yet heard about the TIP Report and, surprisingly, stated she was not aware that TIP was part of Duran's portfolio. (NOTE: This is especially surprising since Del Vecchio greeted the May 7 meeting of the National Anti-Trafficking Coalition at the Ministry.) The DCM explained the purpose of the report and acknowledged that some of the recommendations relate to legislative and judiciary action, which are out of the MPS's purview. DCM also stressed the opportunity for Del Vecchio to urge the Legislature to pass anti-TIP legislation and the Judiciary to get tougher on sentencing. Del Vecchio agreed.

13. (U) On the positive side, Duran informed us that the National Anti-Trafficking Coalition has finished draft Legislative language to codify internal trafficking as a crime (one of the recommendations in the 2007 TIP report. The language was included in an omnibus public security bill currently before the legislature. There is some momentum for the bill (including interest from Dall'Anese to see it approved), and Duran hopes it can be passed this year with the trafficking language included.

14. (U) On June 3, popular daily "Diario Extra" reported on the May 27 closing of a USG-funded, two-year Rahab Foundation trafficking prevention and victim's assistance program in the problematic Central Pacific region. The project closed due to lack of additional funding to extend it. In the article, IOM Director Jose Pires highlighted some of the same problems with trafficking in Costa Rica pointed out in the 2007 TIP report.

15. (SBU) COMMENT: As of June 6, there had been neither media reporting nor official GOCR comment about the TIP downgrading. This could reflect the GOCR's having second thoughts about drawing attention to the on-going TIP problems

here, or simply the GOCR looking for the right time/right way to respond. Either way, we will remain engaged with the GOCR on these issues, reiterating that the 2007 TIP downgrading is meant more to motivate than to castigate.

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